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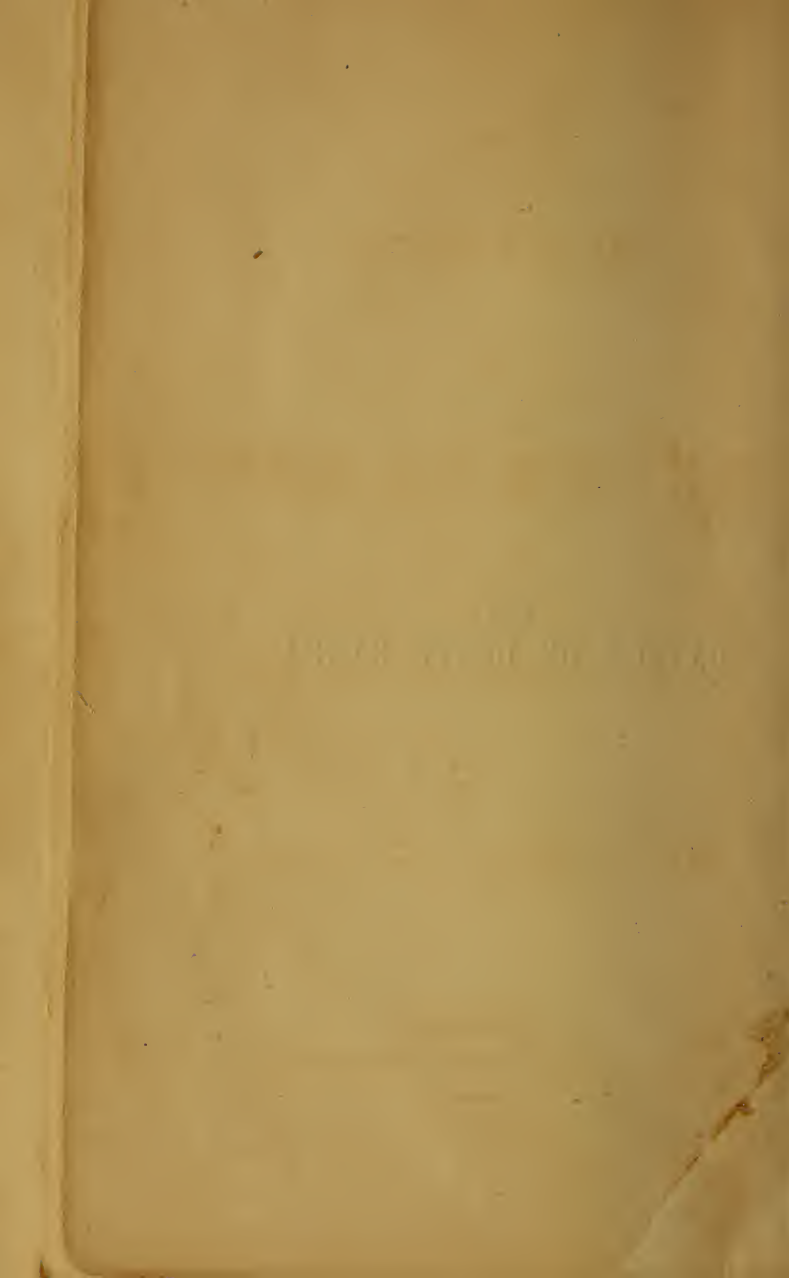
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



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THE
BATTLE OF DRYFE SANDS.



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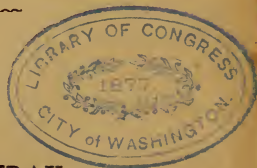
BY
WILLIAM M'VITIE.

LET NOT THE BATTLES BE FORGOT
THAT OUR FOREFATHERS FOUGHT AT HOME.

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INTRODUCTION.

IN the year 1585, John, Lord Maxwell, having quarrelled with the Earl of Arran, reigning favourite of King James VI. and fallen, of course, under the displeasure of the Court, he was, according to the custom of the times, denounced a rebel, and a commission given to Johnston, Lord of Annandale, then Warden of the West Marches, to pursue and apprehend the ancient rival and enemy of his house; but the noble outlaw having numerous vassals and friends, it was thought necessary to send two bands of mercenaries from Edinburgh, to support Johnston. These two companies, commanded by Captains Cranston and Lammie, having reached Crawfordmoor, were attacked and cut to pieces by a party of Maxwells, under the command of Robert, natural brother to the chieftain; who, following up his advantage, burned Johnston's castle of Lochwood, the same night, saying, with glee, "That he would give Lady Johnston light

enough to show her how to set her hood !” In a subsequent conflict, Johnston himself was defeated, and made prisoner ; and is said to have died of grief at the disgrace which he sustained.—*Spottiswood and Johnston’s Histories*.

By one of the revolutions common in those days, Maxwell was soon after restored to the King’s favour, and obtained in his turn the Wardenship of the West Marches. A bond of alliance was subscribed by him and by Lord James Johnston, son and heir of the late Lord Johnston, and for some time the two clans lived in harmony ; but, in the year 1593, the hereditary feud was revived on the following occasion :— Johnston of Wamphray, a relation of Lord Johnston’s with a few friends, went to Nithsdale, and brought away a horse belonging to Crichton of Sanquhar ; but Crichton, with some friends, pursued and took Johnston prisoner, and hanged him on a tree, which happened to be near the place where he was taken. Along with the Laird of Wamphray, was a nephew of his, called William Johnston, but more commonly styled Willie of Kirkhill, from the place where he dwelt. This Willie of Kirkhill, escaping from the Crichtons, got home to Wamphray, and vowing revenge, for his uncle’s death, raised a powerful band of Johnstons, and again going over to Nithsdale, swept the country of cattle for a long way, driving all before them that they could find ; on which Crichton of Sanquhar and Douglas of Drumlanrig, raising what fol-

lowers they could muster, came up with the Johnstons at a place called the Biddes-burn, (a rivulet which takes its course among the mountains on the confines of Nithsdale and Annandale), where a desperate battle took place, in which the Nith men were completely defeated, and the Johnstons carried off the spoil.

After this bloody conflict, the injured parties held a consultation, when it was resolved that they would apply to Lord Maxwell for assistance and protection, but finding he would not cordially embrace their cause, on account of his late reconciliation with the Johnstons, but they overcame his reluctance, by entering into bonds of man-rent, and so became his followers and liege men ; he, on the other hand, granting to them a bond of maintenance or protection, by which he bound himself in the usual form to maintain their quarrels against all mortals, saving his loyalty. A number of other barons came at the same time, and entered into similar bonds. Thus the most powerful and respectable families in Dumfries-shire, became the vassals of the house of Maxwell, many of whom had been so for a long time past, as some of the bonds of man-rent are dated so far back as the year 1518. Among those who signed these bonds, at different times, are Kirkpatrick of Closeburn ; Douglas of Drumlanrig, ancestor to the Duke of Queensberry ; Crichton, Lord Sanquhar, ancestor of the Earls of Dumfries, and many of his kindred ; Stuart of Castle-milk ; Stuart of Garlies, ancestor of the Earls of

Galloway ; Murray of Cockpool, ancestor of the Mur-
 rays ; Lord Annandale ; Grierson of Lagg ; Gordon
 of Lochmaben ; and many others in the south-west of
 Scotland, all binding themselves in the most sub-
 missive terms to become the liegemen and vassals of
 the house of Maxwell,—a circumstance which must
 highly exalt our idea of the ancient power and grand-
 eur of that family ; nay, even the rival chieftain,
 Johnston of Johnston, seems at one time to have come
 under a similar obligation to Maxwell, by a bond dat-
 ed 11th February, 1528, in which reference is made
 to the counter obligation of the patron, in these
 words:—"Forasmeikle as the said lord has obligt him
 to supplie, maintene, and defend me, in the peciabil, brouking, and joyning of all my landis, rentis, &c. and to take my aefold leil, and true part, in all my good actions, causis, and quarrles, leiful and honest, aganes all deedlie, his alledgeance to our soveraigne lord the king, allanerly excepted, as at mair length is contained in his lettres of maintenance maid to me thereupon, therefore," &c. He proceeds to bind him-
 self as liegeman to the Maxwells.

What further shows the greatness of the Maxwells in those days, is a bond of man-rent, extracted from Syme's Collection of Old Writings, granted by the famous freebooter, Johnie Armstrong, of Gilnockhall, to Robert Lord Maxwell, Warden of the West Marches, from which it appears, that the said lord had granted to Armstrong and his heirs sundry lands in

the lordship of Eskdale; so that the Maxwells, at that time, bore sway from the English border to the western shore of Galloway.

The following circumstance places in a still stronger light the popularity of this powerful family in these times of war and plunder :—In the year 1542, a large army, under the command of the Duke of Norfolk, entered Scotland, and ravaged the country north of the Tweed; after this short expedition the English army retired to Berwick. Upon this the King of Scotland sent ten thousand men to the western borders, who entered England at the Solway Frith, and he himself followed them at a small distance, ready to join upon occasion. He soon after gave great offence to the nobility and the army, by imprudently depriving their general, Lord Maxwell, of his commission, and conferring the command on Oliver Sinclair, a private gentleman, who was his favourite. The army was so much disgusted with this alteration, that they were ready to disband, when a small body of English horse appeared, they took flight, and were entirely defeated; which defeat was altogether attributed to the loss of their esteemed leader, Lord Maxwell.

To return to our narration: After Crichton and Douglas had been forced to sign the bonds of manrent, by the failure of their attempt to rescue their property, their alliance was discovered to Johnston by Cummertrees, who also informed him that a num-

ber of others had also put themselves under the protection of Maxwell. On this the warfare between the rival clans was instantly renewed: Buccleuch, a near relation of Johnston's, came to his assistance with his clan, "the most renowned freebooters, the fiercest and bravest warriors among the border tribes." With the bold Buccleuch also came the Elliots, the Armstrongs, and Grahams. Thus reinforced, Johnston surprised and cut to pieces a party of the Maxwell's who were stationed at Lochmaben, and with them Robert Maxwell, natural brother to the chieftain who had before burnt the castle of Lochwood. It is said the Maxwells, on this occasion, took refuge in Lochmaben church, which they bravely defended for some time, till the Johnstons, collecting great quantities of hay and straw, burnt the church and all who were in it, exulting like American savages, in the sufferings of their rivals, and regarding this sacrilegious deed as merely a just and lawful revenge for the destruction of the Castle of Lochwood.

On the other hand, Lord Maxwell, highly incensed by this outrage, and burning for revenge, entered Annandale, at the head of 2,000 men, including all the Barons of Nithsdale, when a desperate conflict, still renowned in tradition, took place at DRYFE SANDS, not far from Lockerbie, in which Johnston, after a terrible struggle, gained the victory. Lord Maxwell, after performing prodigies of valour, was at last

slain. Many of his followers were also slain in the battle : and the barons of Lag, Closeburn, and Drumlanrig were indebted, for their safety, to the fleetness of their horses. The Johnstons pretended that they were inferior in numbers but that could not be ; for, besides all the collected strength of Annandale, they were assisted by the Scotts, Elliots, Armstrongs, and Grahams, the bravest of all the border warriors ; and, reasoning from facts, it is plain that in point of numbers, they were superior to the enemy.

This fatal battle was followed by a long feud, attended with all the circumstances of horror peculiar to a barbarous age. At last, John Lord Maxwell, son to him who fell at Dryfe Sands, in revenge for his father's death, killed Lord Johnston, near the Shieldhill, in the parish of Tinwald, after which he escaped to France ; but, having ventured to return to Scotland, he was apprehended lurking in the wilds of Caithness, and brought to trial at Edinburgh, where he was condemned and beheaded on the 21st of May, 1613.

Thus was finally ended the bloody feud betwixt the Maxwells and the Johnstons, in the course of which each family lost two chieftains, one of whom died of a broken heart,—another fell in the field of battle ; a third was killed in single combat,—and the last perished by the sword of the executioner.—*Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border.*

THE
BATTLE OF DRYFE SANDS.

SOME joy to sing imagined loves,
By purling streams, that sweetly run,
Or, 'neath the shade of vernal groves,
Seek shelter from the scorching sun.

Or, when the angry tempest blows,
And Winter reigns with sway severe,
The cheerful hearth they round inclose,
And jest and mirth's their mental cheer.

Or else on trivial themes they dwell,
Unworthy quite of Poet's note ;
Beyond few lines their scraps scarce swell—
Soon, soon composed, and soon forgot.

A nobler subject is my aim ;—
Oh ! heaven-born Muse, thy bard inspire,
Grant me the pure poetic flame,
A ray of thy celestial fire !

And while I chaunt the chiefs of old,
 Long mouldered in the silent grave,
 Their daring deeds I would unfold,
 Their names from dark oblivion save.

While Scotia's youths are taught by rote,
 The wars of Troy, of Greece, and Rome,
 Let not the battles be forgot
 That our forefathers fought at home.

Ye Johnston's and 'ye Maxwells named,
 I first address myself to you,
 Your fathers they were heroes famed,
 In battle brave, in friendship true.

Where placid Annan peaceful flows,
 And laves its low-laid level vale,
 The Lochwood's lofty towers arose,
 Where dwelt the lords of Annandale.

On Johnstone Moor, 'midst waving grass,
 The towering fortress frowned afar,
 Surrounded with a deep morass,
 A safe retreat in time of war.

Around their chief his potent clan,
 From Errickstane to Solway's shore,
 Dwelt all along where Annan ran,
 A name renowned in days of yore.

To English inroads much exposed,
 As they along the borders lay,
 Oft when their eyes in sleep were closed,
 Dread dangers roused them long ere day.

Thus, nursed 'mid perils and alarms,
 They were a brave undaunted band,
 To battles used, and feats of arms,
 Few could their fierce attacks withstand.

At ambush or surprise alert,
 Freebooters famed both far and wide.
 Who deemed the warrior's sanguine art,
 At once their pastime and their pride.

On Nith's sweet plains their neighbours great,
 The Maxwells dwelt, a potent name,
 Carlaverock's towers their chieftain's seat,
 A place renowned in rolls of fame.

To meet their foes they ne'er were slack,
 Still known to conquer or to die ;
 In fight no Maxwell showed his back,
 Or from the blood-stained field did fly.

Long were their chiefs in arms renowned,
 As Scotia's ancient legends tell ;
 'Midst blood and broils they oft were found,
 And oft their foes before them fell.

When, Turk and Saracen to quell,
 Crusaders rushed to Palestine,
 Full oft in blood of infidel
 The Maxwells dyed their sabres keen.

When Douglas bore the bloody heart,
 The chieftain Maxwell, by his side,
 In all his troubles took a part,
 A faithful friend in danger tried.

When southern foes our land o'erran,
 And thought to force on us their yoke,
 The Maxwells ever, to a man,
 Repaid them bravely stroke for stroke.

When pedant James the sceptre swayed,
 And to his rule bade Scotland bend,
 The Lord John Maxwell, as 'tis said,
 The favourite Arran did offend.

Denounced a rebel, orders flew
 To Johnston, chief in Annan's vale,
 To spoil, to plunder, and pursue,
 The potent Lord of Niddisdale.

Two hundred men from court were sent
 To Johnston's aid in this affray ;
 But Robert Maxwell northward went,
 And did the most part of them slay.

The Lochwood tower that very night,
 He quickly fired, in furious mood :
 "I'll give" said he "Dame Johnston light,
 To place aright her silken hood !"

Lord Johnston with what friends were near,
 Fierce raging for his recent loss,
 Came up with Maxwell's lagging rear,
 Ere they sweet Kinnel's stream could cross.

With success Maxwell quite elate,
 O'erthrew his foes, and took their chief ;
 And Johnston, grieved at his fate,
 Soon broke his heart and died of grief.—

His son succeeds, a warrior fierce,
 A haughty, bold, intrepid lord,
 And Maxwell, by a quick reverse,
 To royal favour is restored.

Now Wamphray's laird, on plunder bent,
 Some friends assembled on a day,
 To fair Nithside in haste they went,
 And stole Sym Crichton's horse away.

But homeward hasting, his false steed
 Plunged with his rider in a mire,
 Now friendless in the utmost need,
 Unhorsed, exposed to Crichton's ire,

And followed fast by deadly foes,
 While faster still his vassals flee,
 The Crichtons round and round him close,
 And, taken, hanged him on a tree !

To Lochwood soon the tidings sped,
 Of deeds that loud for vengeance cry,
 How all of Wamphray's followers fled,
 While he had dyed, as felons die.

"Revenge ! revenge !" Lord Johnston cried,
 "My kinsman's death revenge I will,
 A chosen troop let quickly ride
 With that brave hero, Will Kirkhill.

'Twas now the pleasant month of May,
 And warblings did the wild woods fill,
 The ground was clothed, in livery gay,
 With sporting lambs on haugh and hill.

Smooth Annan's stream sae softly ran;
 The air was balm, the sky was clear ;
 And all was harmony but man,
 Whose breast the furious passions tear.

Now west the hills the Johnston's wind,
 And Crichton's towers again descry ;
 Lulled in repose the land they find,
 None dreamed that such a foe was nigh.

The numerous flocks they drive away—
 The bold Kirkhill still at their head,
 And anguish, terror, and dismay,
 All through the strath of Nith they spread.

Now long and loud the bugles blow,
 And far and wide the tidings fly—
 And couriers hasting to and fro,
 Proclaim the dreadful gathering cry.

Brave Crichton summond all his land ;
 The Douglas of Drumlanrig rose,
 And joined in one united band,
 They chase the spoil-encumbered foes.

Where wimples wild the Biddes brook,
 Along the trackless lonely moor,
 The fierce marauders they o'ertook,
 All unsuspecting and secure.

Now narrow space remained between,
 When Crichton forward freely rode,
 And waving high a bough of green,
 Thus hailed the Johnston's as they stood ;

“Hear now, ye lawless plunderers hear,
 And add not to your former guilt,
 Come quick give up your ill-got gear,
 And stop in time ere blood be spilt.

“I own you’re brave in warlike broils,
 And oft have laid your enemies low ;
 Then from the English drive your spoils,
 And plunder from our mutual foe.

“I speak not this from dread or fright,
 I’ve long been famed ’bove many others ;
 But, why should we together fight,
 We, who are countrymen and brothers.

“Now, if ye wish that war should cease,
 Behold I’m standing ready here,
 To reach the olive branch of peace ;
 If not, I draw my well proved spear.”

“Draw villain, draw,” cried stern Kirkhill,
 “Come on my friends, a volley pour :”
 His followers haste with right good will,
 While swiftly flies the leaden shower.

The Crichtons, quick the front engage ;
 Fierce on the flanks the Douglas falls ;
 While bold Kirkhill, in hostile rage,
 The stragglers to the onset calls.

On every hand they quickly close,
 Nor lag, nor linger, there was found,
 While stalwart strokes and sturdy blows
 Laid numbers prostrate on the ground.

High on a steed, as black as coal,
 Lord Johnston's haughty brother rode—
 Of peerless size and dauntless soul—
 The adverse ranks he furious mowed.

Young Crichton, on a dapple-grey,
 Come, proudly prancing, through the throng,
 A blooming warrior, sweet and gay,
 In arms renowned, in battle strong.

His face, like morning's purple glow ;
 Profusely waved his golden hair ;
 His bosom, pure as mountain snow ;
 He in the fight did bravely bare.

At last these youthful warriors met,
 Their lovely eyes seemed flashing fire ;
 When Crichton thus did Johnston greet—
 "Stop here, exhaust on me thine ire."

So furious to the fight they rush,
 No closer match was ever seen,
 They spring, they strike, they ward, they push,
 While crimson drops bedew the green.

Hugh Johnston waves his blade of steel,
 Like blazing meteor, flaming high ;
 While active Crichton, more agile,
 With stroke on stroke did keenly ply.

Soon Johnston filled with boundless rage,
 Struck, neither knowing where nor how ;
 While Crichton closely did engage,
 And deeply gashed him on the brow.

Of sense bereft, with blood quite blind,
 Unsteady, staggering, back he reels,
 When Crichton's sword, swift as the wind,
 Descending deep, his death-stroke seals.

He tumbles down with dinsome crash,
 Extending o'er an ample space ;
 While quite deformed with many a gash,
 All livid looks his lovely face.

As falls a beauteous mountain oak,
 Whose top long towered it to the skies,
 Its roots uptorn, its branches broke—
 Low, in the dust, it levelled lies.

'Twas so, lamented Johnston fell,
 And filled his followers' hearts with grief,
 For one and all they loved him well—
 His deeds were great, though life was brief.

Now close and closer still they close ;
 To flinch or fly no warrior must :
 Thick, thick as hail, descends the blows,
 While numbers bite the blood-died dust.

Dinwoodie's laird, a wondrous wight,
 In stature tall as mountain pine,
 Drove fierce and furious through the fight,
 While blood dark-dimed his sabres' shine.

Young Douglas, who attention claims,
 Beneath his conquering sword there fell ;
 With many more, whose noteless names
 No Poets sing, nor legends tell.

Now, joined by the brave Kirkhill,
 Who swore Lord Wamphray to avenge ;
 From side to side they slaughtering kill,
 And through the field like furies range.

As when two ravening wolves descend
 From Alpine heights midst storms of snow,
 They run they rage, they furious rend,
 While reeking streams of purple flow.

Far, far o'erpowered the Nith-men yield,
 And with reluctance great gave way—
 They slowly quite the well-fought field ;
 The Johnstons drive their ill-got prey.

But soon a mournful train returned
 Of widows, and of orphans young,
 Their dear relations much they mourned,
 And o'er their clay cold corpses hung.

Their wounds they washed with many a tear,
 And kissed them oft though cold as clay ;
 Then homeward sad their bodies bare—
 Within the sacred ground to lay.

These Barons two, thus overpowered,
 In haste to fair Carlaverock go,
 And unto Nithsdale potent lord
 Unfold at once their tale of woe :—

“Behold thy vassals, peerless chief,
 O lend thine ear to what we tell,
 While we relate what lose and grief,
 So late thy liegemen true befell.

“These hordes of vile moss-trooper bands
 Of late have come from Annandale ;
 They plunder and o’er-run our lands,
 Nor can our force ’gainst them prevail.

“Then please to hear us, mighty lord,—
 Beneath thy shelter let us live ;
 Protection to thy slaves afford,
 And we will due submission give.”

As when by night a fire gleams
 On high hill-top, by shepherds raised,
 At times the flame extinguished seems,
 Which all of late so brightly blazed.

Till meeting more of bushy heath,
 Swift through the furze it forward flies,
 The rising breeze affords it breath,
 Its curling columns climb the skies.

So Crichton fanned the dormont flame
 In Maxwell's breast, that latent lay ;
 The boon for which these barons came,
 He granted them that very day.

To strengthen still their league the more
 They couriers sent both far and near,
 From Ayrshire to the southern shore,
 To bid the chiefs in haste appear.

And quick they came, with one accord,
 And fealty fast to Nithsdale swore ;
 On his own part this potent lord
 Vowed to protect with all his power.

Three days in festive joy they passed,
 Within Lord Maxwell's splendid dome,
 All brothers sworn, so firm and fast ;
 Then on the fourth they hied them home.

But bliss on earth, how insecure ?
 Oft when we look for lasting joys,
 The gathering blast begins to lour,
 And all our prospect fair destroys.

Base Johnston, laird of Cummertrees,
 Allied by blood to Maxwell near,
 Quick mounted, did his bridle seize,
 And for the Lochwood straight did steer.

Lord Johnston there he did inform
 Of those who at Carlaverock were,
 Which made the chieftain rage and storm,
 And for the field himself prepare.

From what example they had set,
 He sent a courier post away,
 To try what aid himself could get,
 To join him on a certain day.

The Elliots and the Armstrongs rose,
 The dauntless Grahams and Nixons too,
 With Scotts that did the train compose
 Of their famed chieftain great Buccleugh.

Assembled all, they take their way
 West through the wilds of Eskdale-Moor,
 And at the closing of the day,
 They reach the Lochwoods lofty tower.

A cheerful welcome they receive,
 And Johnston's forces join with joy ;
 A daring band of warriors brave,
 Prepared the Maxwell's to annoy.

And that same night, at hour of ten,
 A strong detachment took its way,
 And slew a few of Maxwell's men,
 Who stationed at Lochmaben lay.

The brazen trump Belona blew,
 The western warriors heard the blast.
 To arms great Maxwell's followers flew,
 And thronged around Carlaverock fast.

Brave Crichton did an hundred lead,
 As good as e'er did weapons wield ;
 Like rushing torrent seemed their speed,
 At onset on the hostile field.

Drumlanrig brought a hundred more
 Inured to broils and battles long ;
 Kirkpatrick's followers, full fourscore,
 All healthy, active, young, and strong.

Dalswinton numbered eighty-nine,
 As many followed brave Cowhill,
 All clad in dazzling armour fine,—
 Their leaders famed for martial skill.

Full fifty men Carnsalloch led,
 So truly trained to sword and shield,
 His worthy self, a warrior bred,
 Had fought in many a far-famed field.

Renowned Dalziel, a vetran old,
 Who 'gainst the Johnstons oft had fought,
 Yet still a warrior brave and bold,
 From banks of Æ an hundred brought.

The offspring of the Longovilles,
 Brave Charteris up in haste arose,
 With sixty followers at his heels,
 As good as e'er encountered foes.

The Baron Lag brought fifty-four,
 Young Maxwell of the Breckonside,
 With armed followers full fourscore,
 So proudly marched in martial pride.

The Abbot of New-Abbey came,
 With full an hundred men of might,
 Carloverock's Vicar brought the same,
 All trained and ready for the fight.

The town Dumfries two hundred sent,
 All picked and chosen every one,
 With them their provost, Maxwell, went,
 A bold, intrepid, daring man.

Lord Maxwell's own dependents rose,
 Eight hundred warriors truly bred,
 Kirkconnel doth the reckoning close,
 An hundred valiant youths he led.

The eve before the appointed day,
 So joyfully they march along,
 And *sans* excuses or delay,
 To join their chieftain fast they throng.

With dread or fear quite unappalled,
 In festive joy they pass the night,
 Till by their valiant leader called,
 They rouse them at the dawn of light.

An aged servant now appears—
 His head quite silvered o'er with snow,
 And much he begs, all bathed in tears,
 That forth Lord Maxwell should not go.

“My much loved lord, my master dear,
 O! stir not near this fatal strife;
 Or, if you do, I greatly fear,
 You'll in the conflict lose your life.

“Your generous steed, my proper care,
 I went to tend, at time of night,
 And found him stand with bristling hair,
 Quite wild and shaking in affright.

“I tried to sooth him long in vain;
 When home returning, dark and late,
 I saw a sable funeral train
 Come gliding past me at the gate.

"I reached my room in dismal plight,
 And sat me down in sorry mood,
 When looking round, ah ! what a sight !
 Your father's form before me stood !

"Each hair was moving on my head,
 When deeply tolled the castle bell,
 And as the passing phantom fled,
 Large drops of blood all round me fell.

"My worthy friend," Lord Maxwell said,
 "In spite of all these omens dread,
 I from my charge must not recede,
 Nor yet refuse my friends to lead.

"Myself, my cause, I here commit
 To my Creator, all my trust,
 Still let him do as he sees fit,
 With me his erring child of dust.

"I hope to live, and ease your pain,
 Though Honour now impels me on ;
 But if I die, we'll meet again
 Where all distinctions are unknown."

So said, he shook his servant's hand,
 And unconcerned he strode away.
 To where his friends all marshalled stand,
 Prepared to march in fair array.

Now three in depth the circle closed ;
 And all at once their heads they bare,
 While in the midst, the Priest composed,
 Begins aloud his fervent prayer.

“O thou that rules the hosts above,
 And deigns to guide this world’s affairs,
 Regard thy servants, in thy love,
 And listen to our humble prayers.

While in defence of what’s our right,
 This morning early forth we go,
 Do thou assist us in the fight,
 Against our bold o’erbearing foe.

“Great God of battles, lend thine aid,
 In our defence thy power display ;
 In thy protection we confide—
 Through this and every future day.

“If we before our foes must fall,
 We to thy holy will resign ;—
 But grant that we may, one and all,
 In life and death, be ever thine.”

Each warrior bows, with serious heart,
 Assenting freely to the prayer—
 Then to their stations move alert,
 And for the march themselves prepare.

Now high in air unfurled flew
 The Maxwell's ensign waving high,
 The green grass shone with sanguine hue
 Where'er the streamer fluttered nigh.

Far towering topped above them all
 Their loved lord's lofty ostrich plume ;
 Himself, like pine on mountain, tall,
 His visage bright with heavenly bloom.

The dazzling helmet on his brow ;
 The sword resplendent as the flame ;
 The piercing eye of azure blue,
 Did Nithsdale matchless lord proclaim.

With shouts they soon the march commence,
 Their daring leader them before—
 And through Dumfries they did advance,
 Two thousand told, and rather more.

On to the eastward moving still,
 In proper form and order due ;
 They reach Crochmade, that lofty hill
 Where Annan's plains lie fair in view.

Here long they halt both foot and horse,
 Till scouts, sent out, returning late,
 Inform them that Lord Johnston's force
 Encamped lay at Drysdale Gate.

Again the circle close they close,
 Their leaders in the centre stand ;
 While great and small themselves compose,
 To hear their chieftain's high command.

In silver sounds, so clear and loud,
 Their leader brave commenced his speech :
 My friends in arms, of whom I'm proud,
 Your patient hearing I beseech :

There is not one, I may suppose,
 Amongst you all, companions dear,
 But keenly feels and clearly knows,
 The weighty reasons brought us here.

Long have the Johnstons planned our harm ;
 Long have we suffered hurt and wrong ;
 And when in self-defence we arm,
 They 'gainst us raise an army strong.

Confiding in our cause upright,
 Throughout the night we'll tarry here,
 Resolved that we will to-morrow fight
 For all that we on earth hold dear.

If we should perish in the fray,
 In this belief our eyes we'll close,
 That our brave sons, some future day,
 Will be revenged on these our foes.

Whate'er the issue, death or life,
 To our Creator we submit,
 Let him conduct us through this strife,
 As in his wisdom he sees fit.

Now standing forth, the holy man,
 Composure begs with serious air ;
 And as the day with prayer began,
 Again they close the day with prayer.

Then favoured by the evening's still,
 They lay them down awhile to rest,
 Within the hollow of the hill,
 Safe sheltered from the eastern blast.

Lord Maxwell at a distance lay,
 In long loose robes of tartan drest,
 And pensive, viewed the parting day
 That faintly lingered in the west.

When bursting from the welkin red,
 A splendid form, in glory bright,
 All round the hero's mossy bed,
 Illumed the raven's robe of night.

With secret awe and wild amaze,
 The chieftain rose and grasped his spear,
 And soon he saw, with brighter blaze,
 The heavenly vision hovering near.

A warrior form he did espy,
 His loose robe hung with careless grace,
 The flowing drapery of the sky,
 Immortal youth bloomed on his face.

His blazing buckler brightly beamed,
 His sword appeared a meteor red,
 A radiant star the helmet seemed,
 That proudly shone high o'er his head.

Hail ! hero, hail ! the spirit said,
 Hail, potent lord of yon fair strath !
 Behold thy great forefather's shade,
 Once chief, like thee, on lovely Nith.

As Edward felt unto his loss,
 His forces I did often quell,
 And, 'neath the banner of the cross,
 I bravely fought, and proudly fell.

On thee, my son, mine eyes have been,—
 I've viewed thee long with looks of love,
 Thy past transactions I have seen,
 And of thy deeds I much approve.

Long has our house stood high in power,
 By none in Scotia's Isle surpassed,
 But now the sky begins to lour,
 And threats to blow an angry blast.

The noon-day sun, in zenith high,
 May brightly blaze but cannot stay,
 For driving down the western sky,
 It hastens to the close of day.

'Midst tempests that the day deform,
 Its face may oft be overcast,
 Yet after every angry storm,
 May set in glory at the last.

I see the storms themselves discharge,
 That threaten Maxwell's house with woe ;
 I see our house again emerge,
 And forward, forward, joyful go.

Then fly to face thy reckless foes,
 Whate'er the issue, life or death,
 I know thou'lt ne'er thy honour lose,
 Nor yield it till thy latest breath.

If thou in honour's bed must lie,
 In this engagement to be tried,
 As dies the brave I know thou'lt die,
 And as the Maxwells still have died.

No more the heavenly vision said,
 But swift on sounding pinions flew :
 Lord Maxwell humbly bowed his head,
 And bade his angel-sire adieu.

Long stretched upon the ground he lay,
 Still pondering on the wondrous sight,
 Till, in the east, the infant day,
 Dispelled the dusky shades of night.

The coming day the hero views,
 At his command the bugles sound,
 And up in haste his followers rose,
 From where they lay along the ground.

Again they ask high Heaven's aid,
 And all in haste descend the hill,
 In war's habiliments arrayed,
 They reach the plains of Annandale.

Lord Johnston did their coming view,
 And thinking soon to end the strife,
 His bannered forces up he drew,
 In fair array on Sands of Dryfe.

The right, led on by valiant Scott,
 Consisting of the following names :
 The Scotts, who ne'er knew stain or blot,
 The Elliots, Armstrongs, and the Grahams.

Lord Johnston did the centre lead,
 A warrior of approved skill,
 The large left wing had at its head,
 That dauntless hero, Will Kirkhill.

Lord Maxwell too his centre led,
 Brave Crichton did command the right ;
 Kirkconnell true, 'midst battle bred,
 The left brought forward to the fight.

Successive vollies now they pour,
 The shot hails hissing through the sky ;
 They still advance, they aim more sure,
 While thick the dead and dying lie.

Sweet Peace dejected, pale, forlorn,
 Far, far away, lamenting flies ;
 While soft Compassion, heaven born,
 Below Bellona's chariot dies.

'Gainst every feeling calm and mild,
 Their hearts are now completely steeled ;
 And gentle love, by fiends so wild,
 Is driven in anger from the field.

Sad groans and yells burst all around,
 While thickening rise the hills of dead ;
 Infernal Furies sweep the ground,
 In blood-bedrenched garments clad.

The gallant Æ men, ever true,
 Below their leader famed Dalziel,
 With loud huzzas their sabres drew,
 And on their foes with fury fell.

The Becks, the Brydens, and the Brands,
 The Mundells and the Thomsons too,
 With stalwart strokes from sturdy hands,
 Their corpse-paved path did forward hew,

Inclosed around, themselves they place
 All back to back, in double rows ;
 And, as their little band grew less,
 They close, and close, and closer close

But young Kirkpatrick, gallant knight,
 When scouring swiftly o'er the plain,
 Beholds his friends in woeful plight,
 And forward brings his valiant train.

With dreadful shouts at his command,
 They sweep th' encircling foes away,
 Some mangled forms now only stand,
 The remnant of the lads of Æ.

Through all the field they close engage,
 The war-fiend whooped with hideous yell,
 And sporting through the battle's rage,
 Rejoiced to see what numbers fell.

The Johnstons, close together wedged,
 So firm withstand Lord Maxwell's shock,
 And long and fierce the battles raged,
 Before their lengthened line was broke.

At last he bursts their black array,
 They fly like chaff before the wind,
 Death and destruction marks his way,
 His followers brave from on behind.

Still as the Johnston's rally round,
 And groves of spears against him raise
 His sword, that gives no second wound
 In death's dread work incessant plays.

Dinwoodie's stalwart laird he slew,
 Who, falling fast, his sword forgoes ;
 To day's fair face he bids adieu,
 As o'er his eyes Death's shadows close.

Young Lockerbie, a lovely flower,
 His age just opening twenty three,
 Crossed Maxwell's path in evil hour,
 And scorned before a foe to flee.

Lord Maxwell saw with pitying eye,
 This peerless form in beauty's pride,
 And much he wished the youth to fly,
 Or from his keen sword turn aside.

But, urged by honour, on he drove,
 Below the chieftain's conquering steel,
 Which, falling fast, his scull deep clove,—
 Death's leaden hand his eyes did seal.

His lovely locks, all clote with gore,
 Along the ground dishevelled spread ;
 As when a mower cuts a flower,
 The pride of all th' enamelled mead.—

Again the tide of battle turns ;
 Buccleugh's brave son a party brings ;
 His breast with noble ardour burns,
 And 'midst his foes himself he flings.

His followers like a torrent rush,
 Lord Johnston joins the dreadful shock ,
 The Maxwells brave they backward push,
 And swift they fly,—dispersed and broke.

Below Lord Johnston's conquering sword,
 Brave Maxwell of Carnsalloch fell,
 With Closeburn's son, a youth adored,
 Betrothed to beauteous Ann Dalziell.

Young Scott the adverse ranks did mow,
 Around him rise the heaps of slain,
 While like the winter torrent's flow,
 Man's life blood dyes the verdant plain.

Lord Maxwell, on a steed of foam,
 Flies swiftly from the left to right ;
 He calls his forces back to come :
 They rally, and renew the fight.

Again the deepening line they form,
 Man leans on man—shield covers shield ;
 And forward, like a low'ring storm,
 They march embattled on the field.

The Johnstons to their onset yield,
 Nor can the furious charge resist ;
 They fly, disordered, o'er the field,
 So hard and close by Maxwell pressed.

Swift o'er the sands drives Johnston true,
 His scattered forces back to bring ;
 While Scott, still with a chosen few,
 Firm keeps his ground upon the wing.

The flying bands their leader hear,
 And all abashed they backward roll,
 Their daring chieftain doth them cheer,
 Supports and animates the whole.

Again begins the battle's roar,
 Now rolls in wrath each reddened eye,
 Ten times more numerous than before,
 Each means to conquer or to die.

Man fiercely mingled strokes with man,
 And chief with chief did close engage,
 With jaws full gorged, Death furious ran,
 Triumphant through the battle's rage.

Like as a bold projecting rock,
 Against whose sides the billows dash,
 Still stands unmoved 'midst every shock,
 Though troubling seas around it clash :

Thus long unmoved, Lord Maxwell stood,
 While circling foes inclosed him round ;
 Oft did his arm disperse the crowd,
 And numbers levelled with the ground.

The Provost of Lochmaben town,
 He humbles with a well-aimed blow ;
 Rolied on the dust and trodden down,
 In Death's cold grasp he lies full low.

Young Craggylands he overthrew,
 Below his arm Laird Lawson fell ;
 The Romes of Tordeph too he slew,
 With many a Johnston, Graham, and Bell.

At last Lord Johnston he did meet
 Amidst the battle's fiercest rage,
 With blows they did each other greet,
 And hand to hand so close engage.

So nearly match'd in skill and strength,
 They long in equal combat strove ;
 Till Johnston's conquering sword at length
 Brave Maxwell's head assunder clove.

O'erthrown,—Death's victim now he lies,
 Fallen from his hand the ponderous steel,
 In lasting night, his lovely eyes
 The clay-cold hand of Death doth seal.

Thus died great Maxwell of renown,
 A chief deserving loftier lays ;
 And may the pipe be still in tune,
 The reed unbroke that sings his praise.

Discouraged at their chieftain's fall,
 The barons Lag and Douglas fly ;
 The remnant that remains, though small,
 Fight round where Maxwell's corpse doth lie.

Brave Crichton joins Kirkconnell true,
 Resolved their lives so dear to sell ;
 Their friends though dwindled to a few,
 So close condensed their foes repel.

Base Cummertrees low grovelling lies,
 Deep struck with Crichton's piercing steel,
 So wild away his courser flies,
 And snorts in many a circling wheel.

His sabre keen Kirkconnell wields,
 Below his arm fell famed Holmends,
 To Death's embrace Wat Irving yields,
 Down to the dust Pate Murray bends.

He plied his weapon long and well,
 And wrought the Johnstons deadly harm ;
 At length in combat fierce he fell
 Beneath Kirkhill's resistless arm.

Though weak, they still maintain the fight :
 They scorn to fly, they scorn to yield,
 Till, parted by the shades of night,
 They slowly quit the hard-fought field.

Their chieftain's body off they bear,
 And homeward march, a mournful band ;
 Yet still their standard high they rear
 In younger Crichton's trusty hand,

Fast from the field the Johnstons sped,
 And for the Lochwood move again ;
 Yet fifteen hundred warriors dead,
 They leave behind them on the plain.

The Maxwells brave, two thousand men
 That morning marshalled for the fray,
 Though five hundred souls and ten
 Outlived the havock of that day.

Their pious priest, throughout the night,
 Did 'midst the dead and dying stay ;
 Their wounds he dressed by moonshine bright,
 And for their parting souls did pray.

Now midnight's murky hour draws on,
 Pale Cynthia sinks beyond the hill ;
 Yet dreary, darkling, and alone,
 His Godlike task he follows still.

Where'er the groans of death arise,
 From friend or foe, he hastens near,
 And, with the balm of comfort, tries
 The sinners's fainting soul to cheer.

He tells them that repentance true,
 Though late, will still acceptance find ;
 He sets the Saviour in their view,
 Who suffered to redeem mankind :

He points to climes of endless day,
 Beyond this span of mortal life,
 Far, far from war's infernal fray,
 And far from scenes like Sands of Dryfe.

The seraphs, bending from the skies,
 Behold his doings^o overjoyed ;
 And high their notes' of wonder rise,
 To see a mortal so employed.

Now infant day dawns in the east,
 And ushers in the morning clear,
 Fast to the field great numbers haste,
 And wail the dead with many a tear.

And thus this cruel contest end :
 Though long in furious feud did rage,
 Marked by each horror that attends
 A barb'rous and unlettered age.

In deeds too dreadful to rehearse,
 These rival clans passed many a day ;
 With bloody broils and bickerings fierce,
 Year after year slow dragged away.

Meantime the young Lord Maxwell grew
 In stature tall, a chieftain bold,
 The spirit of his father true,
 Did, in his acts, itself unfold.

Lord Johnston, feeble grown and old,
 He on a fatal day did meet,
 And basely, as the story's told,
 He laid him lifeless at his feet.

Soon from the court an order flew,
 Lord Maxwell's body to arrest,
 But quickly he to France withdrew,
 T' escape their rage he deemed it best.

But sick and weary of exile,
 Embarks once more and northward sails,
 Till landing in fair Scotia's isle,
 His native soil again he hails.

In Caithness wilds he tries to hide,
 But found his unrelenting foes,
 To fair Edina he's conveyed,
 And on the block his life doth lose.

'Twas thus this feud at last did cease,
 In which so many heroes fell,
 And ever since, in love and peace
 These once famed clans together dwell.

Now better rule, and better times,
 And milder manners far prevail,
 To curb those bloody feuds and crimes,
 Recorded in this tragic tale.

May Britons still together dwell
 In peace, and aye, through Heaven's aid,
 Victorious, every foe repel
 That dares our native shores invade.

Still may her name and power increase,
 And still in Fames bright annals shine ;
 May Heaven never cease to bless
 Her Princes of Hanover's line.

As long as sun and moon endure,
 May she survive, unscathed by foes,
 Till Nature's last tremendous hour,
 When all terrestrial scenes shall close.

NOTES.

Note I.—p. 9.

The place which bears the name of Dryfe Sands, forms a spacious and extensive plain, about a mile from the confluence of the Dryfe and Annan; and altogether it is a spot which seems to have been marked out by nature as the scene of feudal warfare; and there are few, if there is any situation in the county, which, in this respect, can boast of equal advantages. It was on this favoured spot (I speak in a military sense) that the Maxwells found their opponents drawn up in hostile array, and ready to engage in the sanguinary conflict. Yet, such was the romantic honour and bravery of the Johnstons, or rather, perhaps, such their confidence in their own military prowess, that they disdained to profit by these advantages, and advanced, like the Covenanters on one remarkable occasion, to meet their enemies on the open plain. On the spot where Lord Maxwell fell, is a heap of stones and a large old thorn tree, which all the country for generations past, have known by the name of the *Maxwell Thorn*.

Note II.

*Let not the battles be forgot,
That our forefathers fought at hame.*

p. 10.

Dumfries-shire, in which Dryfe Sands is situated, is the most southern border county of Scotland. It is bounded on the north by the counties of Lanark, Peebles, and Selkirk ; on the west by Kirkcudbrightshire, and part of Ayrshire ; on the south, by the Solway Frith ; and on the east, by the shire of Roxburgh, and a part of Cumberland. It is about 50 miles long, and from 30 to 40 miles broad. The county is divided into three river districts, or dales, as they are called, viz. Nithsdale, Annandale, and Eskdale, traversed by the rivers Nith, Annan, and Esk. These carry nearly all the water which falls on the surface of the county to the Solway Frith. There are a number of other considerable streams which may be called tributaries to these principal rivers, as they nearly all discharge themselves into one or other of them

Dumfries-shire, in 1791, contained 62,960 inhabitants. In former times, it appears to have been far more populous. In latter times, this decrease in the population has originated partly, if not solely, in the modern system of uniting many small farms into one,—a system, regarding the utility of which, economists are still divided in

opinion, and which has given rise to two of the finest poems in the English language,--*The Deserted Village* of Goldsmith, and *The Emigrant* of the late Honourable Henry Erskine. But there is another circumstance, for which the oldest person the writer ever conversed with on the subject, could assign no satisfactory reason. All over the higher parts of the county, there are to be seen numerous vestiges of houses, some of them in the most wild and unfrequented places imaginable, but generally on green spots among the hills. On the farm where the Author was born, and which his ancestors had possessed for time immemorial, he can recollect no fewer than nine different places, in which the ruins of cottages and hamlets could be distinctly traced. In some of these places, there had been five and six houses together; and he has often asked his father, who was an old man, and born on the farm, if ever he conversed with any aged peasant, who could give the history of these cottages, or who recollected their last inhabitants: But, on this subject, the father's knowledge extended no farther than the son's. I have also enquired at several old men in the neighbourhood, who had similar vestiges on their farms, if they knew any thing concerning the history of these interesting ruins, but they all uniformly confessed their ignorance; so that it must have been at a very remote period that these cottages or hamlets were peopled.

Note III.

Where placid Annan peaceful flows.—p. 10.

The river Annan rises in the mountains above Moffat, and after running south, for 37 miles, through the valley of Annandale, it falls into the Solway Frith, at the town of Annan. It has long been a common saying, in the south of Scotland,

Annan, Evan, Tweed, and Clyde,
All arise in one hill side.

On the west side of the hill rises the Evan, one of the tributary streams of the Annan, into which it falls below Moffat. At a very little distance is also the source of the Clyde, which, running west, passes Lanark, Glasgow, Renfrew, Dumbarton, Port-Glasgow, and Greenock; below which it falls into the Irish Sea. On the north side of the same hill, rises the Tweed, which runs in a north-east direction, till it reaches Drummelzier; then, running east, it receives the tributary streams of the Yarrow, the Gala, the Leader, the Tiviot, and the Whitadder, after which it falls into the German Ocean, near Berwick.

Of all these rivers, the Annan has the most beautiful and level course; is also much shorter than either Tweed or Clyde, according to the old saying,—

“Tweed ran, and Annan wan,
Clyde fell and broke his neck,
O'er Corra Linn.”

From the source of Annan to the sea, there is scarce a stone to be seen in it above the size of a small pebble ; the water of itself is pure and transparent as crystal ; the country through which it runs is fertile as the Campania of ancient Rome, and charming as the garden of Paradise.

Note IV.

On Johnston muir, 'midst maving grass.

p. 25.

The parish of Johnston lies on the west side of the river Annan, which bounds it on the east side the whole length of the parish. The land is excellent along the river side. Further distant is Johnston Muir, formerly an extensive track of waste ground, more than four miles in length, till about the year 1785, when the late Earl of Hopetoun inclosed a considerable part of it, on which he built farm-houses, and let it out in farms ;—a work in which he certainly had great merit, as it both beautified and enriched the country ; and, contrary to the common custom, greatly increased the number of inhabitants. Such land as was unsuitable for farms, he planted with different kinds of wood, all of which is now in a very thriving state ; so that what formerly was a barren waste, is now covered

with woods, houses, and corn fields. The Earl of Hopetoun, at the same time, built the house of Raehills, an elegant seat, adorned with extensive plantations, fine gardens, and pleasure grounds.

Note V.

*Around their chief, his potent clan,
From Errickstane to Solway's shore.*

p. 37.

Errickstane, the famous hill before mentioned, where so many rivers have their source, is 1,118 feet above the level of sea.

Note VI.

*On Nith's sweet plains, their neighbours great,
The Maxwells dwelt, a potent name.—p. 39.*

The river Nith rises in the upper part of Ayrshire, and enters Nithsdale by the foot of Corson-cone-hill: it then runs through the valley of Kirkconnel and Sanquhar, after which, it is confined into a rocky passage, which begins near the Ellick Bridge, and winds among hills for a considerable way, till it enters another valley more extensive than the former, containing the parishes of Morton, Closeburn, and part of Penpont, Tynron, and Keir. After passing this valley, it again runs for a con-

siderable way among hills, in a rocky channel, till it reaches the Auldgirth Bridge, where it may be said to enter the valley of Dumfries, through which it runs placidly until it pours all the collected water of the district into the Solway Frith near Carlaverock Castle.—*Jameson's Mineralogical Survey.*

The Strath of Nith, or Stra-Nid, as it was called in old times, is populous, pleasant, and fertile, in the highest degree, and the natives are strongly attached to it. In all their comparisons of persons or of things, it is always said, there is not such another between Corsoncone and the sea ; or between Corsoncone and Carlaverock ; and that, in their opinion, is all the world that is worth minding. In distant regions it is thought and spoken of with that enthusiastic rapture which Scots men only can feel. A great many from this district go to the West Indies, and especially to Jamaica. When these natives of Stra-Nid dine together, (as they do often.) the sacred toast is always given, "To all between Corsoncone and the Sea," when immediately one rapturous huzza succeeds another, and ere the first burst of enthusiasm is over, there is often scarcely an eye in the company but what is seen glistened with a tear.

The Nith, after passing the village of Kirkconnel, reaches Sanquhar, where are the remains of an ancient castle, once the seat of the Crichtons, ancestors of the Earls of Dumfries. Further down

is the Elliock, the seat of Henry Veitch, Esq. Next is Drumlanrig, the seat of the Dukes of Queensberry, On the east side, a little further down, is the village of Thornhill ; within a short walk of which is the castle of Closeburn, the ancient seat of the Kirkpatricks of Closeburn, where Closeburn-hall, belonging to C. G. S. Menteath, Esq. is also situated ; further down on the west side of the river is the Blackwood, Copland, Esq. ; Cowhill, Johnston of Cowhill ; Dalswinton, the ancient seat of the Cummings ; Milnhead, belonging to Frederick Maxwell, Esq. ; Carnsalloch, Johnston of Carnsalloch. At the junction of the Nith with the Cairn are the beautiful ruins of Lincluden Abbey ; —a little to the west is Terregles, belonging to M. Constable Maxwell, Esq. the representative of the once famous family of Nithsdale, the chief of which makes so conspicuous a figure in the Battle of Dryfe Sands.

Next in the course of the Nith is the royal burgh of Dumfries, delightfully situated on the east side of the river, nine miles from its influx into the Solway Frith. It is the county town, and also the most flourishing place in the south of Scotland. There are two bridges over the Nith, the Old bridge was said to have formerly had thirteen arches, but the river is now confined into a narrow channel, and several of the arches are taken away. In the Old Church Yard are many beautiful monuments,

and among others that of Robert Burns, the celebrated Scottish Poet. The town is governed by a provost, three baillies, with merchant and trades councillors.

The assizes for the county of Dumfries and the stewartry of Kirkcudbright, are held in the town twice a-year. It is also the seat of the Commissary and Sheriff Courts, and of the Synod and Presbytery. In the church of this town, Robert Bruce, afterwards King of Scotland, stabbed Cummin, one of the great barons, after he had fled to the altar as a sanctuary.

Dumfries has a large and well attended market, held every Wednesday, there is also a large cattle-market, for, at least, nine months in the year, beginning about the middle of April and continuing every Wednesday till about the first of January. There are three fairs for horses which are well attended. About the middle of November the market for pork commences, which continues every Wednesday till the month of April. Strangers are astonished at the number of swine carcasses that are brought into the town every week during the season. They are mostly bought by dealers from Annan and the border, and as all the green pork is paid for in ready money, the traffick is very lucrative, and circulates a considerable sum of money throughout the county.

On the east of Dumfries lies an extensive morass,

called Lochar Moss, through which runs a river of the same name, which is so very level, that it falls only 11 feet in 13 miles. Several anchors, keels, &c. have been found in this moss, from which it is supposed to have been a frith or arm of the sea, but from the vast quantity of wood in it, is thought first of all to have been a forest, according to the old saying,

“First a wood and then a sea,
Now a moss and ay will be.”

Note VII.

*Long were their Chiefs in arms renowned,
As Scotia's ancient histories tell.—p. 11.*

The following extract from an old legendary fragment entitled “The Bedesman of Nid-syde.” (a composition of great antiquity), shows in what fame the Maxwell's were in these remote ages:—

The child blent owre the Kyrnellis hye,
Y'e Soudan's Oist to see,
By the mone light, he sa and told,
Twa hondrith score and thre ;

His bougill horne, sac sleek and grene,
He blewe baith stark, and lang,
The wakryfe Warders bent their bowys,
Cam forth, wi byll and brande ;

A Bacheleere in Abergown,
 Cam up his men beforne,
 A bettar Captayn was never sene,
 A balder was never born :

In gramarye he was of lore,
 Nae brande coude on hym byte,
 Nae heathen hound, or termagaunt,
 Coude throw his bassonett smyte ;

Schir Eustace Macuswall he's caw'd,
 In sothe Skottlonde he bode,
 On his bred banner stode bedight,
 The egil and the roode.

The Soudan, frae his palzeeron,
 Blent up owre the heich wa,
 The doughetie stalwart Macuswall,
 He on ye Kyrnells saw.

Wha to Conheat, his Lyff-tenant,
 He sayd, tul ye Soudan hy,
 Tel him I com, w'i my Camscho Oist,
 And he or I must dy.

Note VIII.

When Europe joined in wild crusades.—p. 12.

It appears from "Bedesman on Nid-syde," the very curious legend work already alluded to, that great numbers besides the Maxwells went from Nith to assist in driving the infidels from the Holy Land.—

The stalwart Richard, Ynglondes glore,
 To Haly Eard was bown,
 His Brand he branglit sae brilzean,
 He dang the dour Maheum.

The stark and hawtane Macuswall
 Thane of Stra-Nid sae grene,
 Had graith'd him wi the Haly-Corse
 To fair wi' Ynglondes Kyng.

Schir Rodger de Kilpatericke,
 Child of Killosburnes Touris,
 Had in his Basnet, heisit the cerse,
 Zeid frae his Lady's Boures.

Schir Rab the^a Roos, of gentil laits,
 Thane of hie Sanguhars Peel,
 On his Caprousy heis't the corse,
 He stalwart was and led.

Torthorwald's stark, and douchty Wicht,
 Zeid wi' the valziant thrang,
 Mysell graith'd out in Abergown,
 Wend wi' the leve amang.

In twa score Carvels, frae Cockpock,
 Wee brilzeau Lundin raucht.
 A^amyghtye meany, and valziant thrang,
 Wha fremit ferly's saucht.

The myghtye Richard, brank and heigh,
 Tald owre his menzie mony,
 Our Swaukies a, weil graith'd and schene,
 They bang'd baith braif and bony;

Wi winsome fasche, away wee sayl'd,
 Far owre the sea sae braid,
 At Scanderoon wee raw'd to Swaird
 For haly card wee gaid.

NOTE IX.

Far, far o'erpowered the Nith men yield.—p. 19.

It would appear that those of the Johnstons who fought at the Biddes-burn were mostly from Wamphray, and came with Will Kirkhill, to revenge the death of their chieftain, William Johnston of Wamphray (commonly called the Gilliard) who was put to death by the Crichtons. He was a noted freebooter, and a place near the head of Teviotdale, still retains the name of the Gilliard-faulds, being a valley where he used to secret and divide his spoil with his Liddisdale and Eskdale associates. Willie of Kirkhill, the nephew and avenger of the Gilliard, was also a noted freebooter.

The following song, called "The Lads of Wamphray," has long been known in Annandale, and appears to have been composed soon after the battle of the Biddes-burn.

THE LADS OF WAMPHRAY.

'Twixt Girth-head and the Longwood-end,
 Lived the Galliard and the Gilliard's men,
 But and the lads of Leverhay,
 They drove the Crichton's gear away.

It is the lads of Leithenha' ;
 The greatest rogues amang them a' ;
 But and the lads of Stefenbiggin,
 They broke the house in at the riggin'.

The lads of Fingland and Elback hill,
 They were never for good, but ay for ill ;
 'Twixt the Staywood Bush and Langside Hill,
 They stole the broked cow and the branded bull.

It is the lads of the Girth-head,
 The deil's in them for pride and greed ;
 For the Galliard and the Galliard's men,
 They ne'er saw a horse but they made it their ain.

The Galliard is to Nith-side gane,
 To steal Sim Crichton's winsome dun ,
 The Galliard is unto the stable gane,
 But, instead of the dun, the blind he has ta'en.

Now, Simmy, Simmy, of the Side,
 Come out and see a Johnston ride,
 His the bonniest horse on a' Nith-side,
 And a gentle Johnston aboon his hide.

O Simmy Crichton's mounted then,
 And followers has raised mony a ane ;
 The Galliard trowed his horse had been wight,
 But the Crichton's beat him out of sight.

As soon as the Galliard the Crichton saw,
 Behind the saugh-bush he did draw ;
 And there the Crichtons the Galliard hae ta'en
 And nane wi' him but Willie alane.

“O Simmy, Simmy, now let me gang,
And I’ll never mair do a Crichton wrang ;
O Simmy, Simmy, now let me be,
And a peck o’ gowd I’ll gie to thee.

O Simmy, Simmy, now let me gang,
And my wife shall heap it wi’ her hand ,
But the Crichtons wadna let the Galliard be,
But they hanged him high upon a tree.

O think then, Willie, he was right wae,
When he saw his uncle guided sae ;
“But if ever I live Wamphray to see,
My uncle’s death avanged shall be.”

Back to Wamphray he has gane,
And riders has raised mony a ane ;
Saying, “My lads, if ye’ll be true,
Ye shall a’ be clad in the noble blue.”

O back to Nithsdale they hae gane,
And awa’ the Crichtons nowt hae ta’en,
But when they came to the well-path-head,
The Crichtons bade them light and lead,

And when they came to the Biddes-burn,
The Crichtons bade them stand and turn ;
And when they came to the Biddes-strand,
The Crichtons they were hard at hand.

But when they came to the Biddes-law,
The Johnstons bade them stand and draw ;
“We’ve done nae ill, we’ll thole nae wrang,
But back to Wamphray we will gang.”

And out spake Willie of the Kirkhill,—
 “Of fighting, lads, ye’s get your fill !”
 And from his horse Willie he lap,
 And a burnished brand in his hand he gat.

Out thro’ the Crichtons Willie he ran,
 And dang them down baith horse and man ;
 O but the Johnstons were wond’rous rude,
 When the Biddes-burn ran three days blood

“Now, sirs, we’ve done a noble deed,
 We have revenged the Galliard’s bleid ;
 For every finger o’ the Galliard’s han,’
 I vow, this day, I’ve killed a man.

As they came in at Evan-head.
 At Racklaw-holm they spread abroad ;
 “Drive on, my lads, it will be late,
 We’ll hae a pint at Wamphray-gate.”

For, wherever I gang, or wherever I ride,
 The lads of Wamphray are on my side ;
 “And of a’ the lads that I do ken,
 A Wamphray lad’s the king of men.”
Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border.

Note X.

*And quick they came with one accord,
 And fealty fast to Nithsdale swore.—p. 21.*

That the reader may have a just idea of the nature
 of the bonds of Man-rent, often alluded to in the

preceding text, he is here presented with the copy of one, given by Kirkpatrick of Closeburn, to the then Lord Maxwell, at least fifty years before the Battle of Dryfe Sands:—

BOND OF MAN-RENT.

“Be it kend till all men, be thir present lettres me Thomas Kirkpatrick of Closburn to be bundin and oblisit. and be the Tenor, heir of blindis and oblissis me, be the faith and treuth of my body, in manrent and service to ane nobil and mychty Lord Robert Lord Maxwell, induring all the days of my lyfe, and byndis and oblissis me, as said is, to be leill and trew man and servand to the said Robert Lord Maxwell, my master and sall nowthir heir nor se his skaith but sal let the samyn at my uter power and warn him theirow and I sal conceill it that the said lord schawis to me, and sal gif him agane the best leill and trew counsale that I can quhen he ony askis at me, and that I sal ryde with my kin, freyndis, servandis and allies that will do for me, or to gang with the said lord: and do to him aefauld trew and thankful service and take aefauld playne part with the said lord, my maister in all and sindry his actionis causis quarrelis leful and honest movit or to be movit be him, or aganis him baith in peace and weir contrair or aganis all thae that leiffes my (allegeant to our Souveran Ladye the Quenis Grace her Tutor and Governor allanerly except) and thir my lettres of manrent

for all the dayis of my life foresaid to indure, all
dissimulations, fraud, or gyle secludit and away put.
In witness, &c. &c.

This deed is signed at Edinburgh, 3d Feb. 1542.

Note XI.

*And slew a few of Maxwell's men,
Who stationed in Lochmaben lay,—p. 23.*

The Royal burgh of Lochmaben is most delightfully situated on the western side of the Annan; it is adorned with a handsome town-house and steeple, and is a place of very great antiquity. It is said to have received its charter from King Robert Bruce, whose paternal estate was the Lordship of Annandale. At present it contains 900 inhabitants. The town is surrounded by most beautiful lochs, the chief of which is the Castle-loch, where, on a peninsula, stood the once magnificent Castle of Lochmaben, in former times, the strongest fortress on the western border. It is about two miles from Dryfe Sands.

Note XII.

The gallant Æ men, ever true.

Æ, one of the tributary streams of the Annan, rises on Queensberry-hill, and running south, is confined among hills, till it reaches Kirkmichael Mill ; after which it pursues its course through a country level and fertile in the highest degree. At the farm of Dalfible, it runs eastward, which course it pursues till it falls into the Annan, at a little distance from Lochmaben.

South from Kirkmichael Church, is Kirkmichael Place, long the residence of the Dalziell's, Earls of Carnwath, an ancient and highly respectable family. "The lads of Æ," as they used to be called in the country, were long famed for broils, battles, and feats of activity ; at every fair or wedding in those days, there was for the most part a fight, and the lads of Æ were ever formost in the fray.

Before carts were used, or roads made in the country, the merchant goods were all conveyed from one place to another on the backs of Horses, and the farmers on Æ, who were almost all employed in this business, often transported merchandise in this manner from Glasgow to Carlisle, Manchester, and various other towns in England. Wherever they went, through England or Scotland, their names were famous for boxing, cudgel-playing, and similar exercises. A number of them

went to Dryfe Sands, under one of the Dalziells, where they were all killed, and not a man of them, it is said, would have escaped, had not young Kirkpatrick of Closeburn (who was to have been married to Dalziell's daughter) come to their assistance; a little after this instance of heroism, Kirkpatrick himself fell, greatly lamented.

THE END.





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